Wacky Packs: New Fad for the Children of The Skeptical Seventies

By Owen Edwards

"...Wacky Packages are selling ramp... products that kids have had throw...

...ith their put-downs of ...TV and Mom..."

Don't look now, but the pink peril is laying siege to the affluent society. Even as you read this, the all new Wacky Packages Series #3 is filtering from candy counters into wee wonder-ing minds, and who knows when (and how) it will all end?

What are Wacky Packages?, you may well ask. Putting it simply—too simply, in fact—they are a new twist on the classic bubble gum card, that hoary ruse created to sell the uneatable to the unbearable. They are also, in time when polls show public beli... institutions at an all-time low, s... skepticism in its purest form. I... on bubble gum card can ta... faithful cereal like Car... change it into Cap'n Cru... the Munchkin madne... maybe somebody up... long look at what's... on—and off.

In their mi... Packages are... the jocks a...

why. To some gro... ages are about a... gies, residing ... murky limb... and knock... into acc... and th... it's h...

...ging must have a lot to ...kes Wacky Packages ...e series so far has ... that the little ... at the end ...ning. O... certai...

...niel laid do...

...use.

...ve $7," he said at last. "I don't ...hat will be a problem."

...mentioned someone he knows ...sent in 45 original package ideas, ...he doesn't think the Topps people ...ant or need any help from kids. (If ...Wacky Packages go to the 5,000 series, ...though, there's one poor sap who will ...have to buy them all just to make sure ...they don't rip off one of his ideas.)

Another collector named Jeff talked smugly about having "all the rare ones in the first two series," including triples of Brittle Pads (possibly security reasons kept him from giving his last name). But Jeff thinks the great days are over.

"I just don't like them that much any more. This year there aren't that many people collecting, so . . ." He shrugs.

I tell him that people had begun predicting the death of rock 'n' roll when Elvis went on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. He doesn't seem particularly struck by the analogy. Anyway, Jeff turns out to be nine—plainly a jaded age for city kids.

So now we've got Series #3 in its distinctive yellow wrapper. Thirty-three bad to mediocre new puns to send ripples through the wet cement of children's humor. It remains to be seen if the original devotees will keep shelling out or drop back and let a bunch of ambitious young punks take over the territory. Maybe it will even be Donny Osmond and the Partridges again.

A quick look at the new check list shows a trend toward slightly tougher stuff (Rice A Phony, Hawaiian Punks Juice, Snatch-A-Pack), a timid touch of politics (1-A Sauce), and inevitably, the snake taking a nibble at its own tail with a telling item called Foolball Bubble Gum.

Does this mean that the next series —now going to press—will go the route and give the kids the big one, the ultimate Alfred E. Neuman hara-kiri number called Sappy Packages? Or are the wizards of Topps just cop-out artists like all the other grownups? The word out of Brooklyn is wait for #4 . . . if you can.

Two classics from Series #2: "Familiarity seems finally to be breeding contempt."